



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2  
290 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

MAY 17 2012

CERTIFIED MAIL  
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Glenn Cullen, Business Administrator  
Borough of South Plainfield  
2480 Plainfield Avenue  
South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080

Subject: South Plainfield Community Pool

Dear Mr. Cullen,

The purpose of this letter is to summarize the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) review of water testing from a well that is used to fill the South Plainfield Community Pool. EPA has been conducting an assessment of wells that tap the groundwater at or near the Cornell-Dubilier Electronics (CDE) Superfund site. The site is a source of groundwater contamination in the area, particularly the industrial solvent trichloroethylene (TCE). EPA has been visiting a number of properties identified in the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP's) well registry, and we also sought your assistance in reviewing municipal facilities. You identified one well, used to fill the Borough's community swimming pool.

This well was sampled twice and found to have TCE as high as 6.2 micrograms per liter (6.2 ug/L), exceeding the NJDEP Groundwater Quality Standard of 1 ug/L. EPA has also established a drinking water standard for TCE of 5 ug/L.

The NJDEP and EPA criteria were developed to protect drinking water, and the South Plainfield Community Pool uses municipal water for purposes other than filling the pool. Because the well is not used for drinking water, EPA's risk assessor for the CDE site evaluated whether other risks might be posed by the use of this water. A risk assessor estimates the nature and magnitude of health risks to human receptors from chemical contaminants, and other stressors, that may be present in the environment. The risk assessor reviewed possible exposure scenarios for community residents, including swimming and using the pool property for purposes other than swimming, and found that the risks are below levels of concern for these scenarios.

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In addition, we also assessed the potential risks to users of the municipal facilities where the well is located, and workers that operate the well, pumps, and associated equipment. Given the very low levels in the water, EPA's assessment did not identify risks above levels of concern to other building occupants or to municipal employees.

This is not surprising: TCE poses a threat through long-term drinking water exposure, or vapor exposure when it collects in an enclosed space like a basement, and neither of those conditions exist here. TCE is highly volatile and quickly evaporates in the open air. In similar settings, where TCE is present in open water outdoors, EPA studies have found that at least 50 percent of the TCE will have volatilized to the open air while filling the pool, and less than 1 percent (an undetectable level) will remain after 24 hours. Be that as it may, we realize that this may be an area of concern for some people and, as an added level of assurance, EPA is happy to test the water in the filled pool.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to call me at (212) 637-4380, or Diego Garcia, Remedial Project Manager for the CDE site, at (212) 637-4947.

Sincerely yours,



John Prince, Chief  
Central New Jersey Remediation Section

cc: Honorable Matthew Anesh, Mayor  
Ray Rusnik, South Plainfield, Council President  
Edward Putnam, New Jersey Department of  
Environmental Protection